

# **BaptistWay Bible Series for Dec. 18: Disciples follow Christ in his mission**

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## **Disciples follow Christ in his mission**

- Luke 10:1-12, 17-20

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“The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few.” As we look at this phrase, I am sure we can recall sermon after sermon that has been preached to get us to our feet and start proclaiming the gospel to all.

As we take a look at the passage that encompasses the above-mentioned phrase, think about the mission in which you find yourself. Are you on a mission for your family? Are you on a mission for your job? Are you on a mission to make more money? Are you on a mission for more power or a higher status? Most importantly, are you participating in Jesus’ mission?

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Our lesson opens with the Lord appointing 70 people to go in to each town before him to preach the gospel. Some translations suggest that 72 people were appointed for this task. The number may be symbolic to the nations of the world.

Let us not get caught up in the number as to whom the people were. Who were the 70 people Jesus sent out to preach his gospel? These 70 were not the original 12 disciples. The 70 people sent in pairs to preach the gospel were ordinary people just like you and me. Jesus chose these 70 because they had been following him and learning from him. He chose them because they could relay the gospel to others just as well as his 12 disciples could have.

As far as we know, they had no special talents except for those the Lord had given them and their willingness to take part. But they did have him and the promise of his presence!

After Jesus had chosen his 70 people, He gave them instructions. His first instruction was to pray for more workers to join them in their work. He instructs the pairs not to bring along too many items with them because he will supply for all of their needs. He also tells them not to speak to others as they are making their way to the towns.

He does not do this because he does not want them to be polite, but because he wants them to stay focused on their task at hand, rather than getting sidetracked by conversations with others along the way.

As they enter the towns, the pairs are to bring peace to the home they enter. They are to stay in the same home throughout their entire stay in that town. The pairs are to accept all forms of hospitality the family shows them. They are to eat whatever is laid before them. As the pairs are staying in the town, they are to heal the sick and share who Jesus is and what he is doing. They are doing this to prepare the way for Jesus later. They are to tell them that God's kingdom is right on their door step.

If they entered a town and were not welcomed, they were to go into the street and wipe the dust from their feet, saying that the only thing they received was the dust and even that was being returned. They also were to tell the town that God's kingdom was right on their doorstep and they had turned Jesus away. Because he had been turned away, he would reject them on the day of judgment.

Some time later, the 70 returned to Jesus. They were so excited because they had seen many people moved. They were able to see people healed. They were excited because they realized even demons moved in the name of Jesus. Jesus responded to the 70 by saying he had seen Satan defeated. And he had given them the authority and power that would overcome the power of the enemy. Jesus reaffirmed them and reminded them to rejoice in the fact they have a place in heaven because they are participating in Jesus' mission.

Jesus rejoiced and thanked God that the spiritual truth is for everyone and not just those who are leaders or in positions of authority. Jesus was grateful that God had been revealed through his actions, stories and life. This, too, had been made possible by the power God had given to him and to those who proclaimed him and believed.

This also can be seen later in John 13:3. There we read Jesus knew God had put all things under his power, that he was sent by God, and that he would be returning to God.

Are we participating in Jesus' mission? Those 70 people dropped everything to share the love of Christ with others. They used the talents God had given them to serve and tell the story of Jesus. How do we use our time and talents?

Often we are too busy with other things and preoccupied with other missions. In so doing, we cheat ourselves of the opportunity and blessing of serving God. Jesus promises us the same power and authority he gave the 70.

Will we follow as they did? We will, if we are his disciples. After all, being a disciple means following Jesus and participating in his mission.

### **Discussion questions**

- Many things in our lives can get in the way of participating in Jesus' mission. What are you letting get in your way?
- What is Jesus asking you to do to participate in his mission?

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